



# AL QAEDA





# Healthcare Operations



## Purpose

To provide information on the organization known as Al-Qaeda in order to familiarize AMEDD personnel with aspects of the structure and activities of this terrorist organization



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## Agenda

- **The Problem**
  - **Background**
  - **Goals and Objectives**
  - **Ideology**
  - **Leadership**
  - **Command Structure**
  - **Support**
  - **Method of Funding**
- **Terrorist Actions**
  - **Modus Operandi**
  - **Techniques**
  - **Timeline of Attacks**
  - **Successes and Failures**
- **Key Lessons Learned**



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- Usama bin Laden (UBL) was born in 1957 to a family that was well respected by the House of Saud and the people of Saudi Arabia.
- UBL attended Jeddah University and his world views were shaped by Dr. Abdullah Azzam
  - Azzam: Influential figure in Muslim Brotherhood
  - Azzam: Regarded as the historical leader of Hamas and founded Maktab al Khidmat lil-mujahidin al-Arab (MaK) between 1982-84
- After graduation UBL became deeply religious
- UBL started his holy war path when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979



me primary financier of MaK

## The Problem:

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- Al-Qaeda (formed in 1988) was a result of the Afghan war against the Soviets
- UBL's relationship with Azzam suffered near the end of the Afghan war over support
- UBL continued to work with Azzam until Azzam was assassinated
- UBL continued to build wealth
- Members are mainly veterans of the Afghan war
- After the Afghan war, UBL returned to Saudi Arabia
- UBL helped create the first jihad group in south Yemen
- After Desert Storm when Saudi rulers failed to honor their pledge to expel foreign troops, UBL started a campaign against the House of Saud
  - Claimed rulers were "false" Muslims and they must be replaced with the formation of a true Islamic state
  - Saudi regime deported UBL in 1992 and revoked his citizenship for his volatile agenda

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- To establish Islamic states around the world (overthrow “false” Muslims). Essentially to replace the corrupt governments of Muslim states with the rule of *Sharia* (Islamic Law)
- To expel US and Western influences from the Gulf and Southeast Asia
- Capture Jerusalem as a Muslim city
- UBL issued three “*Fatwahs*” or religious rulings calling upon Muslims to take up arms against the US:
  - Radicalize existing Islamic groups and create Islamic groups where none exist
  - Promote destruction of the US
  - Support Muslim fighters

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- A united Islamic state following the rule of the Caliphs
  - Must be done by force
- 1998 UBL announces the formation of the umbrella group -- Islamic World Front -- for the struggle against the Jews and Crusaders
- UBL: His "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places"
  - "the latest and the greatest of aggressions, incurred by the Muslims since the death of the Prophet....is the occupation of the land of the two Holy Places - the foundation of the house of Islam, the place of the revelation, the source of the message and the place of the noble Ka'ba, the Qiblah of all Muslims - by the armies of the American Crusaders and their allies."

**Bottom-line:** sees the US as taking over the holy sites of Mecca and Medina and helping Jews in destroying the Palestinians

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- UBL is still the figurehead
- Al-Qaeda has a chain of command, committees, council of advisors, and leaders/cells
- Many members belong to various other Islamic radical groups
- By February 2002 they had lost 16 to 25 key leaders. Key losses:
  - Khalid Sheikh Mohammed captured in 2003 (3<sup>rd</sup> highest ranking)
  - Mohammed Atef (Al-Qaeda's emir and military commander) was killed in Nov 2001
  - Abu Zubaydah (Al-Qaeda's director of external operations) was captured in Mar 2002.

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- UBL uses Shura majlis (consultative council) to operate his terrorist group; along with his key leaders.
- Four committees:
  - Military - Responsible for recruiting, training, procuring and launching support and military operations
  - Religious/legal - Responsible for justifying Al-Qaeda positions. Members often preach the Al-Qaeda model of Islam
  - Finance - Responsible for developing the financial resources necessary to sustain the group's activities and influence
  - Media - Responsible for disseminating news and information in support of Al-Qaeda political and military activities

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- Al-Qaeda supports three types of groups:
  - Groups fighting regimes led by Muslim rulers which they believe are compromising Islamic ideals and interests (i.e., Egypt, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia)
  - Groups fighting regimes perceived as oppressing and repressing the Muslim populace (i.e., Kosovo, India, and Indonesia)
  - Groups fighting regimes to establish their own Islamic state (i.e., Palestine, Chechnya, Dagestan, and Mindanao)
- Al-Qaeda's broad ideology has enabled it to infiltrate many Islam groups. Ties with numerous terrorist groups (Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Islamic Group of Egypt)

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- Al-Qaeda's financial arrangement characteristics:
  - Accountability between members (checks and balances)
  - Awareness and understanding of obligations for reporting of financial transactions. Efficient use of banking systems
  - Ability to generate money (donations, diamonds to fish)
  - Diverse methods to transfer money
  - Exploit vulnerabilities of specific corporate and financial platforms
- Financial support:
  - UBL's personal wealth (280-300 million)
  - Wealthy Arab well-wishers (specifically in the Gulf region)
  - Siphon from some Muslim charities
  - Wide range of Gulf banks used
  - Transfer of funds via international banks
  - Trade

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- **Attract and Incorporate:**

- Extensive training
- Local infrastructure with local figures
- Local supervision
- Belief in Jihad (striving in the way of God)



- **Initiate and Impel:**

- Long preparations
- Thorough planning
- Conducts rehearsals
- Supervision (direct oversight) from “home-office”
- Maximum casualties and damage
- One or more homicide bombers
- Plausible deniability for UBL

**Terrorist Actions:**

- **Modus Operandi**
- **Techniques**
- **Timeline of Attacks**
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## Sleeper Cells & Hit Squads:

- Attacks on the West have been conducted through two different types of terrorist organizations: the sleeper cell and the hit squad
  - Sleeper cells are groups of terrorists who are already in place and ready to act. Sleeper cells are trained and ready to carry out attacks at a designated time and place. They are loosely organized, and blend into communities easier through legitimate employment.
  - Hit squads infiltrate into the target country shortly before an attack

**Terrorist Actions:**

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- **WMD Attacks**

- Biological weapons
- Chemical weapons
- Nuclear weapons
- Radiological devices
- Conventional high explosives
- Piloted vehicular attacks

- **Assassinations**

- **Bombings**

- Homicide bombers
- VBIEDs



**Terrorist Actions:**

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- **Cyber Attack (Critical Infrastructure)**
  - Power grid
  - Nuclear power stations
  - Emergency services
  - Communications
  - Water
  - Governmental networks
- **Guerrilla Warfare**
- **Hijacking**
- **Hostage Taking**
- **Kidnapping**



**Terrorist Actions:**

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- **Sabotage**
- **SAM Missile Attacks**
- **Shootings**
- **Evidence Points to Shift in MO**
  - Tape found in Afghanistan shows possible new focus of attacks
  - Requires significantly less “lead” time
- **Attacks Chosen/Staged to Produce Different Effects**



**Terrorist Actions:**

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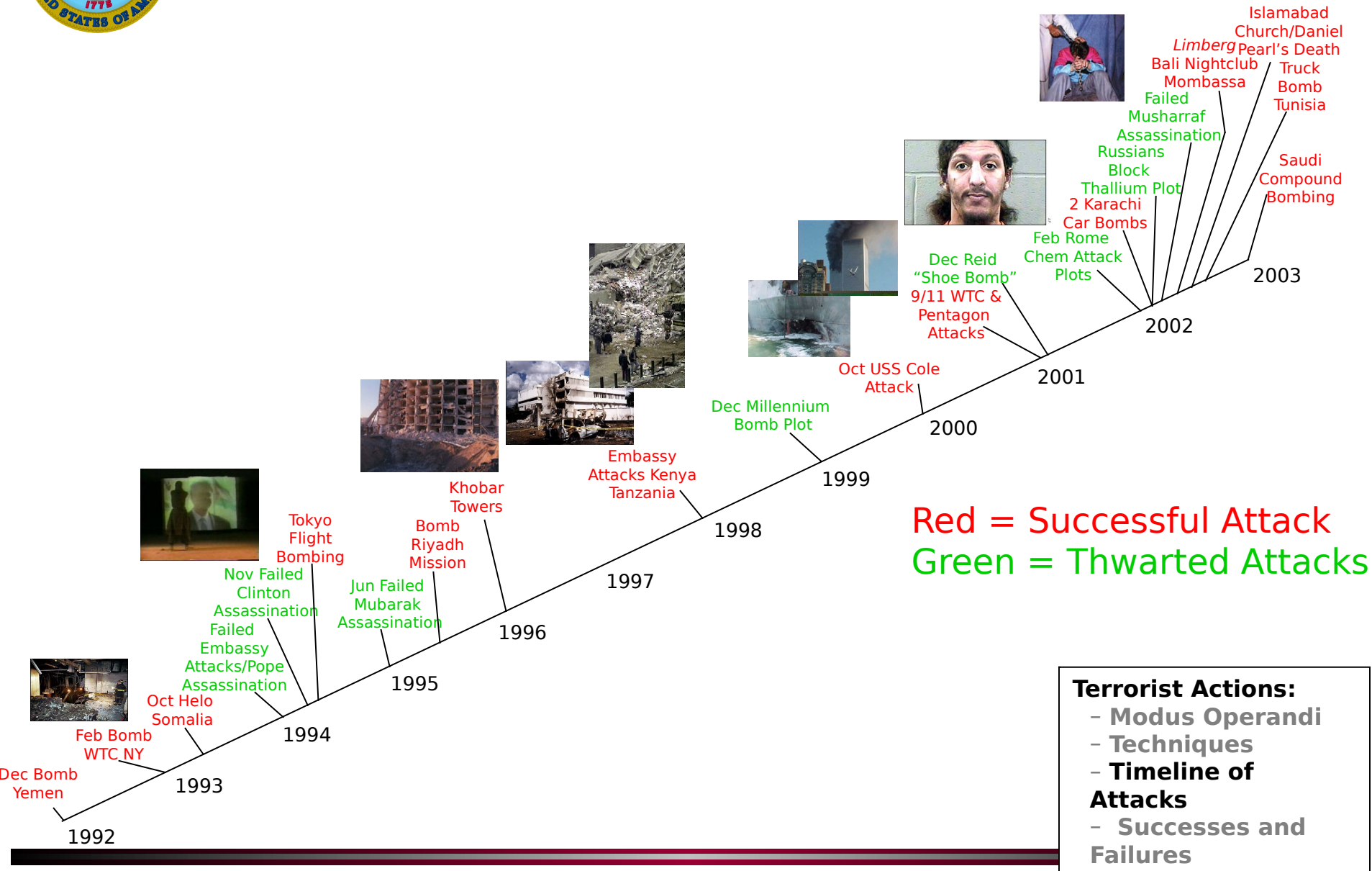


- **Variety of Weapons with Diverse Sophistication and complexity**
- **Use of all Available Modern Communications**





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- **Al-Qaeda remains a global threat**
  - Sophisticated planning, coordination and technology
  - Loose network of Islamic terrorist groups formed around anti-Western agenda
  - Possess high-grade explosives and assumed to possess WMD
  - Committed to increased lethality
  - Can conduct operations on the run
  - Physically and/or ideologically penetrates international and domestic Islamic NGOs worldwide

**Key Lessons Learned:**



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- **Major global flows have facilitated the expansion of Al-Qaeda's influence**
  - Movement of people
  - Proliferation of media and information
  - Accelerated financial movement
  - Movement of technology
  - Increased weapons transfers
- **Filtering terrorists and terrorist activities out of these global flows is difficult**

**Key Lessons Learned:**



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- **Center of gravity in the war against Al-Qaeda is the hearts and minds of the politically uncommitted Muslims**
  - Al-Qaeda's successful operations support recruiting of future terrorists
  - U.S. must defeat bin Laden's ideology
    - No appeasement to bin Laden or his followers
    - Must address critical issues of a Palestinian state, Kashmir, UN sanctions on Iraq and U.S. presence on the Arabian peninsula
  - Avoid the perception that the war is against Arabs and Muslims

**Key Lessons Learned:**



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- **U.S. must reconsider its alliances**
  - Coalition of the willing is preferred against Al-Qaeda, but U.S. must be prepared to go it alone
  - Punish states who support or harbor terrorists
  - Moderate Arab nations should not be viewed as our friends or allies
    - Must be democratic
    - Must be secular
    - Must fight Islamic terrorism

**Key Lessons Learned:**





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- **Fighting terrorism is part of a vicious cycle**
  - Combat can lead to increased refugees, greater poverty, frustration and despair -- all potential causes for increased hatred of the U.S. and allies
  - Prolonged military action may strain coalitions and foster resentment among Arabs and Muslims
  - In Afghanistan, support for nation building is critical to eliminating future sanctuary for terrorists
    - Humanitarian
    - Political
    - Economic
    - Security assistance

**Key Lessons Learned:**



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- **War on Terror vs. Criminal Justice**

- “War on Terror” label emphasizes the magnitude of the threat and assigns DoD the dominant role
- The criminal justice approach de-politicizes the war
  - Tends to focus on individuals and limits the perception of an ethnic or religious war
  - Makes acts of terrorism illegal and illegitimate
  - Facilitates the support of the international community
  - Limits political debate, both home and abroad

**Key Lessons Learned:**



## Conclusion

This briefing has provided you information on the organization known as Al-Qaeda in order to acquaint you with aspects of the structure and activities of this terrorist organization